

penetrated beneath the stone. The commonest plant in the immediate vicinity was *Cochlearia* sp., echoing Whitehead's finding. *Cochlearia* could not have been the foodplant at Angle, however, or at least not the only foodplant, since it was relatively scarce there and could not have supported the enormous population of the bug. Whatever the plant or plants used by the bug at Angle, it must have other foodplants on other sites, besides *Cochlearia*. There are a number of inland records from British sites which can have no plant species in common with a Pembrokeshire saltmarsh. Krogerus (1960) regarded *O. leporinus* as characteristic of poor sedge fens in Scandinavia.

As an incidental finding, it may be of some interest to note the other Auchenorrhyncha recorded in association with *O. leporinus* on the Angle saltmarsh, and their apparent plant preferences. They were: *Aphrodes aestuarinus* (Edwards), common amongst *Juncus gerardii*, frequent amongst *Puccinellia*, occasional amongst *Halimione portucaloides*, *Scirpus maritimus*, *Triglochin* and mixed marsh vegetation; *Aphrodes limicola* (Edwards), common amongst *Puccinellia*, frequent amongst *Juncus gerardii* and occasional amongst *Halimione portucaloides* and mixed marsh vegetation; *Macrosteles horvathi* (Wagner), frequent by sweeping *Puccinellia*, occasional from *Juncus gerardii*; *Paramesus obtusifrons* (Stal), confined to, and abundant on, *Scirpus maritimus*; *Psammotettix putoni* (Then), frequent on *Puccinellia*, occasional on *Juncus gerardii*.—P. Kirby, 49 Barnstock, Bretton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE3 8EH.

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***Trigonocranus emmeae* Fieber (Hemiptera: Cixiidae) in Northamptonshire.**—I captured a single female of this species by sweeping tall but rather sparse grassland growing on the ballast of a disused mineral line at Brookfield Plantation, Northamptonshire (SP892923), 24.vii.1991. The six previous records of *T. emmeae* in Britain are widely scattered, from Lancashire, Yorkshire, Surrey and Kent (Kirby, 1992). The Northamptonshire site has certain features seen in other of this insect's known localities: bare ground; loose stones, and underlying limestone. Perhaps the most unusual feature of this record is the finding of this secretive and usually ground-dwelling or even subterranean insect sufficiently far above ground to be captured by use of a sweep net.—P. Kirby, 49 Barnstock, Bretton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE3 8EH.

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**The extinction of a population of *Aphis mammulata* Gimmingham & Hille Ris Lambers (Hemiptera: Aphididae).**—I reported the discovery of a population of *Aphis mammulata* Gimmingham & Hille Ris Lambers (McLean, 1988) as the second locality for this species in Britain. Following the publication of that note I kept the population at Cavenham NNR under surveillance and succeeded in photographing the aphids (which have dark grey females and orange males) being attended by *Lasius fuliginosus*

(Lat.) on the leaves and petioles of buckthorn, *Rhamnus catharticus* L. Unfortunately, before detailed observations to discover the biology during the spring and early summer could be carried out, the population became extinct. The last sighting of the species was on 19.viii.1989 and when the locality was revisited on 2.vii.1990 it was discovered that *Lasius fuliginosus* was no longer foraging over the bush, and the aphid has not been seen subsequently. It is possible that the loss of the ant nest led to the disappearance of the aphid because *A. mammulata*, in common with some other aphids, is assiduously attended by ants, in this case probably exclusively *L. fuliginosus*. These ants remove the aphid honeydew as a source of food and also defend the aphids by removing insect natural enemies. In the absence of the protection given by the ants, the aphids seem unable to survive, though the underlying causes of their extinction remain unknown. So far no further localities for the aphid have been discovered to enable further investigations to proceed.—I. F. G. McLean, 109 Miller Way, Brampton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE18 8TZ.

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**Emergence and pairing of *Rhyssa persuasoria* L. (Hymenoptera: Ichneumonidae).**—On the very hot afternoon of 22.v.92 I went to some woodland, 10 miles south of Reading to search for microlepidopterous larvae on *Fragula alnus* Miller. The damp area where most of the bushes grow is reached by first walking through a large pine plantation and it was here that I became unexpectedly side-tracked.

Several male *Rhyssa persuasoria* were flying actively over and along some felled pine trunks stacked at the ride-side, and closer examination then revealed a female *Rhyssa* busily engaged, its ovipositor fully inserted down what I took to be an emergence hole of the woodwasp *Urocerus gigas* (L.). After watching her for a while I then went on to my intended location, returning to the pine trunks at 7.40 p.m. Although the sun was still shining on some of the trunks I had not expected to see much ichneumon activity at this time of day. No males were flying in the manner noted earlier but I was surprised to see many congregated within approximately one square foot of trunk surface. I managed to count 20 but there were probably a few more. They were all in a state of some excitement, moving quickly back and forth and definitely dominated by the largest specimen who attempted to drive away other males by picking them up with its mandibles, shaking and tossing them aside.

The reason for all this activity was not immediately apparent, especially as a large female was noted, a few inches away ovipositing down a *Urocerus* tunnel and hence apparently unattractive to males. Then, just below a sliver of bark, the shining vertex of an ichneumon head, flush with the bark surface but coloured at variance with its surroundings, was noted, and all seemed explained.

It was by now 7.55 p.m. Within a few seconds the female *Rhyssa* began emergence but well before complete extrusion she was enveloped by a mass of frantic males. With the aid of a small twig I picked up this animated ball of wings and legs and with difficulty managed to remove most of the suitors.

Finally, two males remained, seemingly both paired with the female, and these were eventually removed. The unencumbered female then flew on to a nearby standing pine trunk, remained there a few seconds, then disappeared up into the canopy.

This interesting episode left me with some unanswered questions. (1) How is a newly